

EXPLORING THE PROCESS OF SELF-REGULATION IN WRITING UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

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Abstract: The purpose of this research is to explore the process of students self regulation during the process completing a thesis at English Education Department of Universitas Islam Malang. the researcher used a purposive sampling technique in choosing participants. The researcher used semi-structured in-depth interviews. The interview involved five participants (three female and two male) in the English department. The research found six themes based on the five participant's stories: motive, method, time, physical environment, social environment, and performance. The results showed that students who have low achievement have a pattern that is in line with previous research, they cannot set learning goals and control their affective factors such as self-efficacy and anxiety. Therefore, in order to improve the quality of their writing, teachers should motivate their pupils to employ self-regulated writing techniques as effectively as possible. In addition, some of the high score strategies strongly showed the setting of writing time, making a schedule to meet lecturers for guidance, and graduation targets.

Keywords: self-regulation, writing undergraduate thesis.

INTRODUCTION

Writing ability is the ability to describe the process of expressing ideas, thoughts, and experiences in writing. Writing is a productive skill that requires students to create written texts that convey ideas and messages (Jamoom, 2021). Writing is one of the most difficult skills in learning English as a Second Language (ESL) or English as a Foreign Language (EFL) (Budjalemba, 2020).

Academic writing is a complex task therefore, it becomes more challenging at the university (Oshima & Hogue, 1999). As a result, researchers who choose to pursue academic writing should pay attention to these guidelines, especially students who will produce academic writing in the form of a thesis. The study conducted by Febriani (2023) reported that there are two internal and external factors that can cause students to struggle in academic writing.

Thesis writing is also described as a metacognitive writing style that demands a high degree of accountability from students in terms of problem-solving and judgment. Students should also possess a high degree of talent and perseverance when writing (Mahfudhoh, 2019). The reason for those challenges could be the poor level of English language competency among

the students. Students writing performance is influenced by a variety of linguistic elements, including spelling, grammar, vocabulary, and punctuation (Budjalemba, 2020).

At the university level, especially undergraduate students who are writing a thesis. Self-regulation is very important, especially for students writing. While engaging in self-directedness exercises, individuals take up standards of conduct that operate as motivators and guides, controlling their behavior in advance through self-reactive influence. Therefore, a combination of internal and environmental influences governs how humans function (Bandura, 1991). An essential component of writing education is understanding the attitudes and behaviors of EFL students, including their writing self-efficacy and self-regulation (Rahimi & Fathi, 2022). It is thought that these two elements help EFL students write more effectively (Boykin et al., 2019).

Self-regulated writers are believed to actively control their writing assignments by establishing objectives, resolving problems, and using and controlling the necessary techniques (Csizér & Tankó, 2017). Based on recent research, students' writing performance across a range of academic levels is positively impacted by SRW (self-regulated writing) procedures (Umamah & Cahyono, 2020). In a previous study, the study conducted by Sun and Wang (2020) showed that EFL students had moderate levels of self-efficacy and rarely used SRL (self-regulation learning) techniques when writing. In addition, SRL (self-regulation learning) techniques and self-efficacy both contribute substantially to the prediction of students' writing proficiency. therefore, the importance of self-efficacy and self-regulation to students' writing ability.

METHODS

This study employed a narrative research methodology to focusing on an undergraduate student writing a thesis at Universitas Islam Malang. The researcher used a purposive sampling technique to select participants, focusing on five final semester students with good self-regulation skills. Data collection involved in-depth face-to-face interviews using semi-structured questions in Indonesian and English.

The study involved five participants (three female and two male) in the English department, who were asked about their motivation, methods, time management, physical environment, social environment, and performance. The interviews were conducted in Indonesian and English, with each question ranging from 17-21 minutes.

Data analysis involved transcribing interviews using the six steps of thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). The researcher engaged with the data embedded in the participants' voice notes, identifying significant narratives from their perspectives. The transcripts were carefully examined several times, taking careful notes on any instances where participants expressed their thoughts and opinions about students' self-regulation in completing their thesis writing process.

Trustworthiness was ensured through the triangulation strategy, which involved verifying the suitability of findings using various sources. The study involved five participants as volunteers who had specific criteria to become participants. The transcripts and interview topics

were then reviewed with the participants to gather feedback and make improvements. Before completing the interviews, consent was obtained from both participants to adhere to research ethics. The author then analyzed the interview data to derive findings based on theories relevant to the research.

FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

This study asked how the participants can be self-regulated in writing a thesis, especially the author divides two types of student results who had good writing scores and writing scores that were not good (high achievers and low achievers). We found six themes based on the five participant's stories: motive, method, time, physical environment, social environment, and performance. These themes correspond to the participant's insight about self-regulated for students in writing a thesis.

Motive

Based on the result of interview, the student motive are summerize in the following table.

Table 4.1

No.	High
P1	The first participant has a pattern that self-evaluation and having a target to graduate on time are important things and the main motivation to immediately complete his thesis. The source of motivation obtained tends to be from parents.
P2	The second participant has a motive that having a plan to graduate soon is very important and tries not to waste time. The main source of motivation obtained by this participant tends to be from the supervisor.
P3	The third participant has a motive pattern that finishing on time, and not procrastinating, and the target of graduating quickly becomes his motivation reference. The main motives from parents.
No.	Low
P4	The fourth participant has a motive pattern that the main source of motivation is from parents and spouse.
P5	The fifth participant has a motive pattern that his main source of motivation is his parents, spouse, and peers.

Method

Based on the result of interview, the student method are summerize in the following table.

Table 4.2

No.	High
P1	The first participant has a method that is more likely to be done casually and has a special target for each progress.
P2	The second participant, in this participant, used more varied methods such as searching for topics of interest and understanding and looking for references to journals and others.
P3	The third participant has quite varied methods as well such as looking for topics that are easy to understand and are of interest, collecting reference journals, reading many journals, and utilizing AI assistance.
No.	Low
P4	The fourth participant had a method that was more flexible in time and consistent in writing. The participant also said that the strategy used was not too detailed but the participant more often asked for help from the supervisor.
P5	The fifth participant, the methods used are also quite varied such as listening to music, maintaining energy, playing games, and refreshing the brain by drinking coffee. This participant has a more relaxed and unhurried strategy.

Time

Based on the results of the interview, the student time are summerize in the following table.

Table 4.3

No.	High
P1	The first participant has time management that the participant has a progress target every day and does not procrastinate working on the thesis, such as avoiding self-

	procrastination, self-evaluation, avoiding carelessness, and making progress every day.
P2	The second participant has a time management that the participant has a progress target everyday and does not procrastination on the thesis, such as avoiding self-procrastination, self-evaluation, avoiding carelessness, and making progress every day.
P3	The third participant has a time management that the participant has a progress target everyday and does not procrastination on the thesis, such as avoiding self-procrastination, self-evaluation, avoiding carelessness, and making progress every day.
No.	Low
P4	The fourth participant, this participant divides his time into short-term and long-term. Short term such as working once in five days and long term such as working twice a week.
P5	The fifth participant has a short time setting. This participant prefers to work at night for a short period.

Physical Environment

Based on the result of interview, the student physical environment are summerize in the following table.

Table 4.4

No.	High
P1	The first participant, in this participant, chooses an environment that tends to be sepia or quiet because with such an environment, concentration and focus increase.
P2	The second participant, in this participant, chooses an environment that tends to be sepia or quiet because with such an environment, concentration and focus increase.
P3	The third participant, in this participant, chooses an environment that tends to be sepia or quiet because with such an environment, concentration and focus increase but this participant prefers to write while listening to musical instruments.

No.	Low
P4	The fourth participant, in this participant, chooses an environment that tends to be sepia or quiet because with such an environment, concentration and focus increase.
P5	The fifth participant, in this participant, chooses an environment that tends to be sepia or quiet because with such an environment, concentration and focus increase but this participant prefers to write while listening to musical instruments.

Social Environment

Based on the results of the interview, the student social environment are summarized in the following table.

Table 4.5

No.	High
P1	The first participant, in this strategy, chose the help of the social environment on the supervisor and the internet.
P2	The first participant, in this strategy, chose the help of the social environment on the supervisor and the internet.
P3	The third participant, this participant asked for help from the supervisor and other friends.
No.	Low
P4	The fourth participant, in this strategy, chose the help of the social environment on the supervisor and the internet.
P5	The fifth participants ask for help from their social environment to friends and the internet, rarely asking for help from the supervisor.

Performance

Based on the results of the interviews, the student performance are summerize in the following table.

Table 4.6

No.	High
P1	The first participant has the performance of not procrastinating working on the thesis and has targets and plans to graduate faster.
P2	The second participant has the performance of not procrastinating working on the thesis and has targets and plans to graduate faster.
P3	The third participant has the performance of not procrastinating working on the thesis and has targets and plans to graduate faster.
No.	Low
P4	The fourth participant, has a performance that pursues the reach of time, meaning that he works if he is rushed by the lecturer.
P5	The fifth participant, this last participant has a performance that is more concerned with finding a comfortable place because it will affect the performance of the thesis.

Based on the results of the six interviews, it can be said that high achievers students use more of the six strategies, while students who have low achievers rarely use the self regulation writing strategy.

The thesis is the final task for students to get a bachelor's degree in their studies. Every student at various universities must work on a thesis that is from on the topic in their respective fields. Of course, students are required to write a thesis for the final goal. In the meantime, every student has self-regulation for the completion of his thesis. Start from goal setting, self-motivation, and others. This research explains the discussion in detail about the findings of the data that has been analyzed. The results of the discussion are, how the process of students controlling their self-regulation in writing a thesis. The study conducted by Mistar et al. (2023) Found there are six strategies in writing, self-monitoring, cognitive processing, The techniques of authentic practice, form-focused processing, metacognitive beginning, and content-focused processing. This is consistent with our findings, such as motive, time, method, physical environment, social environment, and performance. The results show that self-regulation that refers to six strategies can prove that high score and low score students have different strategies, high achievers is more focused on the six self-regulation strategies while low score only a few strategies are applied, such as time management, motive and performance are very different from high acvievers.

According to Baron and Byrne (2005), "social support is physical and psychological comfort provided by friends or family members." Based on the definition of social support above, it is concluded that parental social support is the comfort, care, appreciation, and assistance received by children in a close relationship with parents. This study is in line with the results of researchers that the motivation obtained from parents can improve maximum performance. The study conducted by Murdiana Sitti et al. (2019) showed that optimism and procrastination of students who are writing their thesis has a very significant negative correlation. The higher the level of optimism of students who are writing a thesis, the lower the level of their procrastination in completing the thesis requirement. This research is in line with the results above that students who delay writing a thesis cannot graduate on time and the impact that occurs students experience stress and abandoned theses. The study conducted by Muh Mujib Da'awi et al. (2021) showed that Social Support has no effect if it is not in accordance with the needs. So it is important for social support providers to determine the needs and types of Social Support needed. So that stress can be reduced with the right Social Support. This research is in line with the results of researchers that social support, especially those from supervisors and those from friends or others, depends on the performance of these students because some of the students studied by the author are more inclined towards lecturers, therefore the results achieved are successful. The study conducted by Agnes and Paulus (2022) found that students tend to delay revising the thesis and do not allocate time to review and proofread the thesis. Avoidance behavior is claimed to be the most dangerous anxiety because students tend to avoid writing which will hinder them from making progress. Our research found comparable results, that low-score students are more likely to have this, based on interview data low scores always procrastinate final assignments and use messy and unstructured time management so that study procrastination occurs.

In the process of preparing a thesis, It is normal for us to have feelings of laziness or boredom when it comes to writing assignments, searching for books or journal references, challenging instructors, excessively specific requests from instructors even though they are the most beneficial to you, trouble locating book sources, etc. The secret to students' success in the writing process is having a solid knowledge of the thesis that they have assembled. Students require non-technical variables to maintain their health, stamina, and confidence in order to succeed later on, in addition to having a strong thesis, comprehending the material, and so forth. Each of these elements contributes to the effectiveness of students' self-control in assembling a thesis.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

Based on the result of the research, this study investigates the self-regulation of students in writing a thesis, focusing on high achievers and low achievers. Six themes were identified: motive, method, time, physical environment, social environment, and performance. The first participant's motive was self-evaluation and a target to graduate on time, with parents as the main motivation. The second participant focused on having a plan to graduate soon and avoiding procrastination, with supervisors as the main source of motivation. The third participant focused on finishing on time and not procrastinating, with parents as the main motivation. The fourth

participant used a flexible and consistent method, often seeking help from the supervisor. The fifth participant used various methods, such as listening to music, maintaining energy, playing games, and drinking coffee. Time management was also assessed, with the first participant having a daily progress target and avoiding procrastination. The second participant had a daily progress target and avoiding procrastination. The fourth participant divided his time into short-term and long-term tasks, while the fifth participant preferred working at night. The study analyzed the motivation patterns of students in various settings. The first participant chose a quiet environment to increase concentration and focus, while the second, third, and fourth participants preferred a quiet environment but preferred writing while listening to musical instruments. The fifth participant sought help from their social environment and the internet, rarely asking for supervisor assistance. The performance of the students was also analyzed. The first participant did not procrastinate on their thesis, while the second, third, and fourth participants did. The fifth participant focused on finding a comfortable place to improve their thesis performance. The study found that high achievers have a good motive pattern, which affects their motivation. High achievers can use their motivation patterns correctly, leading to successful self-regulation. Conversely, low achievers have poor motive patterns, as seen in one case where one achiever experienced burnout and lower motivation. The study suggests that the motivation patterns of low achievers are unsuccessful and do not increase motivation.

The study reveals that the methods used by high and low achievers in thesis writing differ significantly. High achievers focus on more influential methods, such as collecting references or journals, which make it easier for students to complete their thesis. Conversely, low achievers do not focus on academic matters and use inefficient methods that slow down thesis writing. Time management is crucial for academic preparation, with high achievers having efficient and flexible time management. They avoid procrastination and are on time, which can have a positive impact on students' productivity. Conversely, low achievers have time management and are more likely to procrastinate or delay thesis writing, which can lead to stress, overthinking, and burnout. The physical environment also plays a role in students' progress, with working in a quiet or quiet environment increasing concentration. The social environment, particularly the assistance received from friends or other people, also influences students' performance. High achievers have a positive performance, as they avoid procrastination, which can accelerate writing performance. Conversely, low achievers have negative performance, such as feelings of guilt or regret, less optimal tasks, and receiving punishment or sanctions from lecturers. In conclusion, high achievers have positive strategies but are more likely to have positive ones, while low achievers are more likely to have negative strategies.

There are still many students who are unable to apply self-regulation strategies effectively, starting from setting time, learning methods, and choosing a good environment. Therefore, for students to process their self-regulation strategies, they need to process their self-regulation strategies while writing a thesis and understand how important it is to graduate on time and not to delay working on the thesis. This research is too complex so had many branches to be examined more deeply. Future research should focus more on investigating more deeply the elements of self-regulation to be researched one by one using quantitative methods. To overcome the limitations of the current research, which only uses two variables, researchers can use more variables for future research.

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